

Charlotte Business Journal - April 24, 2007
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Study: N.C. ranks 5th for tech job growth

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North Carolina ranks fifth in the nation for job growth in the high-tech sector, a new study says.

The state had a net gain of 7,600 jobs in 2005, according to the report, titled *Cyberstates 2007: A Complete State-by-State Overview of the High-Technology Industry*.

North Carolina ranked as the 16th-largest cyber-state, employing 142,300 tech workers with a total payroll of \$10 billion.

The report, from AeA, the nation's largest technology trade association, covers all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

"North Carolina's tech industry is rising fast," says Mike Levin, executive director of the AeA's southeast council, which includes North Carolina. "It is growing for the first time since 2001, and that growth is spread across a number of sectors."

High-tech workers earned an average annual wage of \$69,700 in North Carolina, ranking the state No. 19 in the country.

The state's largest tech-industry gains in 2005 came in service-related sectors. Internet services added 3,900 net jobs, a 33 percent increase from 2004. Following that were engineering services, which added 1,200 net jobs, and R&D and testing labs, which added 1,100.

Nationally, the high-tech industry is picking up, the report says. High-tech employment grew by 146,600 out of 5.8 million workers in 2006, the second year in a row the U.S. tech industry has added jobs. State-by-state employment figures for 2006 are not yet available.

Alpharetta, Ga.-based AeA, formerly known as the American Electronics Association, is a national nonprofit trade organization with 2,500 member companies representing all segments of the high-tech industry.

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